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Contact: Mike Roddin
Mike.Roddin@us.army.mil
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The Fuel Efficient Ground Vehicle Demonstrator (FED) Program Awards Multimillion-Dollar Contract

DETROIT ARSENAL, WARREN, MI ─ The FED Program kicked off the first of three working groups Oct. 27, combining industry, academia and government to develop a Department of Defense (DOD) ground vehicle demonstrator to reduce fuel consumption and maintain vehicle protection and performance.

"We have men and women at risk from moving fuel in theater," explained U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) Product Development Executive Director Thomas Mathes. "If we can improve fuel efficiency, we can take warfighters out of harm's way. We need to focus on operational capabilities, reducing cost and dependency on oil. The FED project will drive the art of the possible."

Twenty-five company, university and government subject-matter experts met at the Sterling Inn, Sterling Heights, MI, to evaluate more than 130 ideas and proposals submitted to the FED Program. The week-long working group broke into six technology subgroups to dissect and brainstorm submissions and major internal workings of ground vehicles to discover potential avenues for reducing fuel consumption.

The FED Technology Subgroups:

- Propulsion/Engine
- Alternative Material
- Auxiliary Power/Electrical Loads
- Systems Integration/Operational Change
- Fuels/Lubricants
- Chassis and Suspension.

In conjunction with the technology subgroups, FED personnel will send TARDEC engineers to work with Ricardo, Inc. of Van Buren Township, MI, to learn how industry develops fuel efficiency vehicle concepts.

Ricardo was awarded a multimillion-dollar contract Oct. 31 to apply its Total Vehicle Fuel Economy™ systems engineering expertise to the FED Program. The company will evaluate combinations of current and emerging technologies to define vehicle configurations that may reduce fuel consumption while maintaining vehicle performance.

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FED will begin reviewing systems concepts Dec. 1, 2008, and start evaluating modeling and simulation as early as April 2009.

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TARDEC is the Nation's laboratory for advanced military ground systems and automotive technology. A leading technology integrator for the U.S. Army Materiel Command's Research Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM), TARDEC is headquartered at the Detroit Arsenal in Warren, MI, located in the heart of the world's automotive capitol. TARDEC is a major element of RDECOM and partner in the TACOM Life Cycle Management Command. As a full life-cycle engineering support provider-of-first-choice for all DOD ground combat and combat support weapons and vehicle systems, TARDEC develops and integrates the right technology solutions to improve Current Force effectiveness and provide superior capabilities for the Future Force. TARDEC's technical staff leads research in ground vehicle survivability; mobility/power and energy; robotics and intelligent systems; maneuver support and sustainment; and vehicle electronics and architecture. TARDEC develops and maintains ground vehicles for all U.S. Armed Forces and numerous federal agencies.

For additional information about TARDEC's forthcoming developments and other technologies, please contact ***Mike Roddin at*** **mike.roddin@us.army.mil**.